

**IN THE CLAIMS**

Claims 1-6 (Canceled).

7 (Previously Presented). A method comprising:  
forming a metallic precursor directly on a semiconductor substrate; and  
oxidizing said metallic precursor using ~~in~~ a liquid oxidizer.

Claim 8 (Canceled).

9 (Original). The method of claim 7 using an oxidizer in an aqueous solution.

10 (Original). The method of claim 7 including forming a metal oxide dielectric over a silicon substrate.

11 (Original). The method of claim 10 including forming a metal oxide dielectric of hafnium, zirconium, or tantalum.

12 (Original). The method of claim 7 including depositing a metallic film using physical vapor deposition.

13 (Original). The method of claim 7 including oxidizing using a liquid oxidizer selected from the group including solutions of O<sub>3</sub>, H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>, and organic peroxide.

Claims 14-26 (Canceled).